



NGC News

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NGC Ancients: Judaeen Coinage

This month, Dave Vagi discusses Judaeen coinage.

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Counterfeit Detection: Contemporary Counterfeit 1875 Shield Nickel

This 1875 nickel instantly stood out due to its numerous planchet flaws.

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USA Coin Album: Some Older Numismatic Books of Interest, Part One

Hobby periodicals frequently publish announcements and reader



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reviews of newly published numismatic works. But what of books published 10 years ago or more, still of value but now out of print and largely unknown to current hobbyists?

[Read this article...](#)

NumisMedia Market Report: A Look Back at FMV Performance Part II

Last month, we reported on various series and how they performed throughout 2010. While the metals moved higher, many numismatic coins were easily saleable. However, with the economy in a downturn, buyers were still looking for discounts.

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From the NGC Archives: 1920 Mercury Dime

Renowned German-American sculptor Adolph A. Weinman created this type of dime that is, more correctly, called the Winged-Head Liberty.

[Read this article...](#)

1907 Rolled Edge Eagle Brings \$2.185 Million in Heritage \$53 Million FUN Auctions

Part of \$62 million+ Heritage "First Week" Auctions, including \$7.74+ million FUN Currency Auction and \$9.28 million NYINC World & Ancient Coin Auction.

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ANA Presents Destination Education Event

Mining and Minting in Carson City, March 20-23, following the ANA Money Show in Sacramento, Calif.

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Spectrum Group International's Bowers and Merena Auctions to Join Forces with Stack's to Create Stack's-Bowers Numismatics

Bowers and Merena and Stack's to merge in 2011.

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2010 NGC Registry Award Winners

Posted on 1/7/2011

We applaud everyone for their individual accomplishments in each and every set and thank all of the members who make the Collectors Society the vibrant community it is today.

Annually, NGC recognizes outstanding achievement in Registry set building. We would like to thank all of the participants in the NGC Registry and congratulate everyone on their individual accomplishments. The number of outstanding collections in the NGC Registry is remarkable and we are honored to have the opportunity to review them all.

Five winners were selected in each of three competitive categories: Best Classic, Best Modern and Best Presented. Additionally, we chose four winners for Custom Sets in the following categories: Best Overall, Best World, Most Creative and Most Informative. Finally, we are honoring three outstanding Collectors Journals authors.

Our team of experts reviewed all of the top sets across every category in the Registry. After much consideration, they selected the following sets. Congratulations to our winners!

Best Classic Sets

[MLMM Collection – MLM Morgan Collection](#)

Morgan Dollars are arguably the most popular series in American numismatics. A complete set involves several dozen coins, and this collection is outstanding for both its completeness and average grade. Only the key date 1892-S and 1893-S dollars are less than Mint State, the remainder of the set populated by splendid Choice and Gem coins. Some highlights include 1879-S Reverse of 78 grading MS 65 DPL, 1882-O/S in MS 65, 1890-O with a grade of MS 66 PL and a stellar 1895-S grading an amazing MS 66. Though a common date, this collection's



1881-S is an uncommonly beautiful MS 68★.

[wasatch coins – my quarter eagles](#)

Collecting 19th-century USA gold coins by date and mint is no minor undertaking, and this remarkable collection is well on its way to becoming complete. The early issues are mostly Choice AU pieces, with the last 25 years or so consisting of Choice Mint State jewels. Among the more noteworthy entries are 1842-D grading AU 55, 1850-C in MS 61, 1853-D checking in at an impressive AU 53 and a rare 1865 certified as AU 50. The final four issues in the series, 1904 through 1907, are all superb gems grading a whopping MS 67.

[JLRiddell – Louisiana Eagles](#)

The rarest denomination of USA gold coins by date and mint are the eagles, mintages of which were typically small until the 1890s. This awesome collection presents a complete run of the New Orleans issues 1841 through 1906. The owner provides his own list of highlights, but these are worth repeating here: 1841-O AU 55, 1859-O AU 55, 1879-O AU 58 and 1883-O AU 58. All of these are very rare dates, but this collection also includes coins noteworthy for their high grades, such as the 1880-O in MS 62 and 1903-O grading MS 65. And, in case you didn't know, J. L. Riddell was melter and refiner of the New Orleans Mint in the 1840s.

[TD Petersen – TDP -3 cent nickel proofs](#)


Most old-time coin collections included complete runs of proof three-cent nickels, but such sets have become rare since the 1970s. This one is absolutely complete and consists of uniformly superb gems. It kicks off with the rarest proof of this coin type, an 1865 grading PF 67 Ultra Cameo. Other superior entries include 1870 grading PF 67★ Cameo, 1877 in PF 68★ Cameo, 1881 certified as PF 68★ Cameo and the scarce 1886 grading PF 68. This is a lovely run of very carefully selected specimens.

[A Client of Barry Stuppler – A & A Illinois Peace Dollar Set](#)

Though somewhat overshadowed by the Morgan series, Peace Silver Dollars are beautiful coins when found in top condition. This collection is complete and of uniformly high quality throughout. Outstanding coins include 1922-D grading MS 67, a gorgeous 1924 in MS 68, 1926-D in MS 67 and a very rare MS 65 example of 1928-S. The key date 1934-S is an impressive MS 66, while this collection's 1935, though common through the grade of MS 65, is a whopping MS 67 gem.

Best Modern Sets

[Brian Andersen – Brian's Rainbow Roosies](#)

This writer has been in coins long enough to remember when a silver coin wasn't even offered for sale until after it had been routinely dipped white, so to see a complete collection of silver Roosevelt Dimes, all of which have gorgeous toning, is a rare treat. Consisting of very high grade coins, most of which are certified with Full Torch and the NGC ★ designation, this set is a remarkable achievement. Among the many highlights are the following: 1948, 1950, 1951, 1952-S and 1955-D, all grading MS 68★ FT, as well as a rare MS 67+  FT specimen of 1961-D.

[Dr. Naranjo – Kennedy Half Dollars 1964-Date, Proofs](#)

The Kennedy Half Dollar, though rarely seen in circulation, remains a favorite with collectors. Especially prized are the proofs, all of which are included in this superb collection. From 1973-S onward, each piece is a perfect PF 70 Ultra Cameo, while earlier issues all grade at least 69. Some highlights include 1964 Accented Hair grading PF 69 Ultra Cameo, superb Special Mint Set coins of 1965-67, all grading MS 69 Cameo and the popular 1998-S commemorative edition grading SP-70.

[The Ness Collection – Only the Best for the 21st Century Set!](#)

It's hard to believe that the current century is already old enough to form a type set, but this collection is splendid proof that such a set can be memorable. Though it's not the highest-point entry, the owner reveals that the Lincoln Memorial Cent proved to be the key at MS 70 Red. Other condition rarities include a 2005-P SMS dime grading MS 69 FT, a 2004-D Texas Quarter in MS 69 and a very scarce MS 69 example of the 2005-P SMS half dollar grading MS 69.

[Specialty One – 1965-1967 Special Mint Sets](#)

The 1965-67 Special Mint Set series consists of only 15 coins, but this collection makes the most of them. All of the coins are in outstanding condition, kicking off with a superb 1965 cent grading MS 67 Red Ultra Cameo. Easily the greatest condition rarity is the 1965 half dollar in MS 67 Ultra Cameo, but other memorable entries include the following: 1966 nickel, quarter and half, all grading MS 68 Ultra Cameo, as well as 1967 nickel and quarter, also grading MS 68 Ultra Cameo. These are all lovely coins.

[fish – Year of the Dog I MS](#)

1970 was evidently the year of the dog, as this attractive set includes all of the non-proof United States coins bearing that date, some 11 pieces in all. Both varieties of the 1970-S cent are included, and these grade MS 66 Red (Small Date) and MS 67 Red (Large Date). The most significant entry in that year's Uncirculated Set from the Mint was, of course, the non-circulating 1970-D half dollar, and this set's example is a glorious MS 66 ProofLike. Another important

condition rarity is the 1970-D dime, grading MS 66 FT.

Best World Sets

[Stunmai – Texas CAR-8Rs](#)

The Central American Republic was a transitional entity between Spain's New World colonies and what ultimately became individual nations. This collection consists of the eight-reales coinage of the CAR, and it is nearly complete. These scarce coins of the 1820s-40s are mostly Choice AU, with a few rare Mint State examples, as well. Among the most memorable coins are 1830NG M Reverse of 1830 grading MS 63 Prooflike, 1831CR E and 1831CR F (both XF 45), 1831NG M in AU 53, 1841NG MA in AU 55 and the overdate variety 1847/6NG A, grading an awesome MS 64.

[POLDAN – POLDAN's Victorian Florins](#)

The silver florin was a latecomer to the British sterling coinage, debuting in 1849. The Victorian Gothic series is notable for being rare in Mint State, but this nearly complete collection is comprised mostly of such pieces. Standout entries include 1855 MS 64, 1857 MS 65, 1865 MS 64, 1874 MS 65 and 1877 Without Die Number, grading MS 62. The rare 1892 Jubilee florin grades AU 58. The Old Head type is more common, but condition rarities include 1895, 1897 and 1898, all grading a very impressive MS 66.

[Clay – MEMMOTT COLLECTION Canada Proof Dollar](#)

This fascinating collection includes all of the proof, collector-edition dollar coins minted by Canada 1981 to date. The majority of entries are graded PF 69 or 70 Ultra Cameo, attesting to their superb condition. Some of the highlights include 1985 National Parks, 1989 Mackenzie River, 1990 Henry Kelsey and 1991 Steamship Frontenac issues, all grading PF 70 Ultra Cameo. Perhaps the premier rarities in this collection are the 1997 Silver Flying Loon and the 2002 Queen Mother issues, both certified as PF 70 Ultra Cameo.

[Arif – ARIZOE BI NGC](#)

One of the relatively new features of modern coinage is the use of two different metals as component parts of a coin, rather than simply mixing them. This collection is complete for China's bi-metallic Panda issues of 1990-97. Multiple denominations are part of this impressive collection, and each entry is a beautiful piece certified as PF 69 Ultra Cameo. Top scorers include the three Hong Kong Expo coins of 1990-91 and the 50 Yuan pieces of 1995, 1996 and 1997. These are coins that present the very finest in numismatic technology and art.

[Rudman coleccion – IRM-JAMAICA- PENNY -1869-1900](#)

This collection is something one will seldom see – a complete series of circulating halfpennies from Jamaica 1869-1900. Jamaica was formerly a British colony, and these coins were struck at the Royal Mint in London or at the commercial Heaton Mint near Birmingham. All are Mint State coins, which is a really remarkable achievement. Highlights include 1869 and 1882-H, both grading MS 65, 1887 in MS 64, 1894 in MS 65 and 1895 certified as MS 64.

Best Presented Sets

[Jon Lorenzo – Jon Lorenzo Business Strike Trade Dollar Collection](#)

The United States trade dollar was initially successful in its intended role but ran afoul of declining silver prices and abuse of the coins in domestic circulation. This collection includes all of the issues intended for general circulation, some 18 coins in all. Each is Choice or Gem Mint State, and all of the entries are accompanied by photos and background text which make this collection a real educational tool. Highlights include the rare 1873-CC in MS 64, 1875 grading MS 65, the popular 1875-S/CC variety in MS 64, 1877-S in MS 66 (ex: Eliasberg) and the rare 1878-CC certified as MS 64 (ex: Norweb).

[Electric Peak Collection – Large Cents 1839-1857](#)

Comprising a complete date collection of Braided Hair Cents, these 19 coins are nearly all gems. Indeed, the average condition is simply astounding. Each coin is illustrated and accompanied by text describing its qualities. The owner has even included the Newcomb variety numbers for the benefit of specialists. Some of the best entries are 1842 MS 67 BN, 1849 MS 66 BN, 1851, 1852 and 1855 (each grading MS 67 BN). The scarce 1857 issue is certified as MS 65 RB.

[Jackson – Morton Short Set of Full Strike Walkers](#)

The Walking Liberty Half Dollar series is extremely popular, and the “short set” of 1941-47 is an affordable goal for many collectors. This distinctive set was assembled with an eye toward overall quality, with special emphasis on strike quality. The owner’s commentary on each issue reveals the relative rarity of fully struck examples. Each coin is illustrated, as well. Condition rarities include 1941-S at MS 66, 1942-S at MS 66 (which the owner notes is an underrated date), 1944 and 1946-D (both MS 67). This Registry set serves as a valuable primer for anyone assembling the 1941-47 series.

[W. K. F. – Kerry's Franklin Set #1](#)

Very close to completion, this outstanding set of Franklins is as yet missing two issues. The owner’s fanatical devotion to supreme quality is undoubtedly the reason, but the coins already present are a delight to the eye and represent some very important condition rarities. Chief among these are the following: 1949-S,

1951-S 1953 and 1960-D, all grading MS 66 FBL. Other impressive entries are 1955 and 1957-D, both certified as MS 66 FBL. The owner describes this series in terms of “love” and “obsession,” and this commitment really shows.

[Lehigh96 – The Atlantic City Set of Jefferson Nickels](#)

This long series of Jefferson Nickels 1938-64 is nearing completion, though several issues are awaiting the location of suitable specimens. The owner is clearly determined to have the finest set, if not in terms of numeric grade or points then certainly in terms of overall quality and eye appeal. Several entries are also rare varieties, such as the 1941-S Large S grading MS 65 and the 1946-D over inverted D nickel at MS 66. Other highlights include 1939 Reverse of 40 MS 67, 1939-S Reverse of 38 MS 67, 1943/2-P MS 65 5FS and 1951-S MS 67★. This set’s owner really knows his nickels and shares this information freely with readers.

Custom Sets

Most Creative Set

[Guy Mc – The Collection of Palladium Coins of the World](#)

The recent announcement that the US Mint is moving into the area of palladium coinage makes this set a very timely entry. Most of the coins produced in palladium thus far by various countries are included in this collection, and the unusual nature of such coinage has led to the use of very distinctive designs. Each is illustrated and described with its original mintage, though the owner notes that a spike in the price of palladium ten years ago likely reduced the number of coins extant. Also provided are links to the owners other sets so that viewers can learn more about specific country’s coins. The grades of the coins are outstanding, with most pieces checking in at MS 69 or PF 69 Ultra Cameo.

Most Informative Set

[BoneHead – BoneHeads Collection of Blanks and Planchets](#)

A mint error enthusiast, the owner of this collection has assembled a rich assortment of blanks (unmilled) and planchets (milled) intended for United States coins. The former are further distinguished as Type 1 (unannealed) and Type 2 (annealed). A wealth of information about the minting process is provided with this presentation, and the numerous examples included are all illustrated. The weight and composition of each entry are also provided, making this a most complete tutorial that should be required viewing for anyone contemplating a similar type of collection.

Best World Set

[Dash Elezi – The Elezi Family Collection](#)

This set's owner celebrates his ethnic heritage with an impressive collection of Albania coins from 1926 to 2002. The early issues coined at the Rome mint featured superb designs, and the quality of these coins is excellent. Highlights include 1926R 5 qindar leku grading MS 66 RB, 1926R 2 franga MS 66, 1926R 20 franga commemorative MS 65 and an example of the rare 1927R 100 franga AU Details. The set also includes several rare prova (pattern) pieces, such as two varieties of the 1928R 100 franga in MS 61 and a 1929-R 100 franga prova grading MS 63.

Best Overall Set

[Xan Chamberlain – Xanno Error Indians](#)

Improvements at the US Mint in recent years have made the production of error coins nearly extinct, so it is wonderful to be able to see such a fine collection of vintage pieces. Including dozens of Eagle and Indian Cent error coins, this set is fully illustrated, something essential given the topic. Some of the more spectacular entries are an 1859 die cap grading MS 61, a double strike of the same date in MS 61, 1863 off-center graded MS 66, 1874 with curved clip in MS 65 RB, a gem MS 65 BN Shield Nickel on a cent planchet and an 1891 struck multiple times both centered and off-centered (MS 62 BN). Both the coins and presentation of this set are top-notch.

Collectors' Journals

The Collectors' Journal awards are our chance to highlight the great entries by our members. This area of the site is all about collectors sharing their passion for the hobby with each other. We're proud to give this award to the collectors who have done an outstanding job of journaling their collecting experience.

[W.K.F.](#)

[e4norbi](#)

[Beaw](#)

Best in Category

And as always, we have given out the Best in Category awards for the year. A full review of the winners, including lists of the Best in Category winners can be found on our [2010 Awards Archive page](#).

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NGC Certifies Newly Discovered Platinum Eagle Variety

Posted on 1/14/2011

A 2007 W platinum \$100 piece in proof with an obvious die-polishing error has been found.

The latest oddity to surface in the U. S. Mint's American Eagle Bullion Coin series is a 2007-W platinum \$100 piece in proof with an obvious die-polishing error. This popular coin type, which features a facing eagle with wings outstretched, also includes a shield on the eagle's breast. Draped over this shield is a banner inscribed with the W mintmark at left and the word FREEDOM at right. On dies having a normal polishing pattern, this incuse word displays the same brilliant finish as the coin's fields, thus standing out within the frosted banner. The newly-discovered variety has the word frosted so that it blends in with the rest of the design. Presently unique, this curious coin has been certified by NGC as PF-70 Ultra Cameo, and it's also identified on the label as FROSTED FREEDOM and DISCOVERY SPECIMEN.

The 2011 edition of R. S. Yeoman's A Guide Book of United States Coins illustrates this coin type with a U. S. Mint-generated rendering that indeed shows the word FREEDOM frosted, as on this error coin, but that illustration is believed to be a conceptual drawing that



predated actual production. With evermore of the Mint’s die preparation becoming automated, it’s likely that this die simply missed the step which normally would have polished the incuse lettering to a mirror finish. Though the present coin is the first example found with a uniformly frosted finish to the banner, it’s likely that others must have been struck, and collectors are urged to examine their 2007-W proof platinum \$100 coins for additional specimens.

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United States

FUN Show Delivers for Collectors and Dealers

Posted on 1/18/2011

Tampa proves to be an excellent back-up location for this annual winter event.

Relocation of the Florida United Numismatists' winter coin convention to Tampa did not deter anyone from attending this highly anticipated annual event. Attendance was excellent throughout the long weekend. NGC's booth was busy at nearly all times, with customers lining up to both submit and pick up coins, as well as view the fabulous display of beautifully toned United States commemorative coins (see accompanying article).

A convention center parking fee of just \$5 for the day certainly warmed the hearts of many attendees, as parking costs have become an issue at other major shows around the country. The FUN officers and staff put on a well-organized and smooth-running event, and Tampa can certainly be counted on as a back-up location for those years when the usual Orlando Convention Center venue is not available.

Among the topics overheard at the NGC booth was a general satisfaction that NGC's EdgeView® Holder has now become standard issue for all of its encapsulated coins. Also garnering high marks was the debut of NGC's new holder for the 5-ounce silver bullion coins issued in conjunction with the US Mint's America the Beautiful program. The scarcity of these coins in the marketplace has limited opportunities to view both the coins and the new holders, but initial responses have been positive.



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2010 Collectors Society Luncheon at FUN

Posted on 1/18/2011

The annual Collectors Society Luncheon for Registry and Message Board participants was held on Saturday, January 8, at the FUN Show in Tampa, Florida.

Nearly 100 individuals attended the luncheon and each member received a specially encapsulated 2007 P Washington \$1.

Scott Schechter, vice president, sales and marketing, welcomed the members and thanked them for their participation in the Registry and on the Message Boards. Mark Salzberg, chairman of NGC, discussed current topics in numismatics, service offerings and new launches in the past year. The luncheon rounded out with an informal Q&A session.

Schechter commented, "The luncheon is one of the best opportunities for us to sit down with collectors and talk about the hobby. We get a lot of helpful feedback and fresh ideas. It's also a perfect way for us to say thanks to our members for their support and participation. We look forward to it every year." Videos of the luncheon will be posted on the website in the next week.



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United States

NGC's Display of Fabulous Toned Commems a Highlight of FUN

Posted on 1/18/2011

Vividly toned silver commemoratives from two private collections on display at FUN.

While the FUN show is notable for the splendid numerous exhibits mounted by collectors and dealers, perhaps the biggest draw of this year's winter FUN show was the awesome gathering of gorgeously toned United States commemorative coins displayed at the NGC booth. This special exhibit featured silver commemorative coins from the Bingham and Schultz Collections, respectively. More colors than found in a rainbow were seen in these outstanding coins. All of the selections were very high grade certified examples, these lofty grades due in no small part to their superb coloration. The coveted NGC Star ★ designation was omnipresent in this display.

The classic silver commemorative series of 1892-1954 is renowned for coins featuring exceptional toning. Created as collector pieces from the outset, these coins oftentimes were preserved with great care. The height of commemorative mania in the 1930s coincided with the introduction of coin albums marketed by dealer Wayte Raymond under his National brand, and their sulfurous, cardboard pages made for some truly spectacular and symmetrical toning patterns over the years. In addition, many of the commemoratives of the 1920s-50s were sold in their own cardboard or paper packaging which imparted similarly stellar toning.

Mounted in a special display case to one side of the NGC booth, these wonderful coins drew rabid toning fans and casual collectors alike. The combination of good lighting and close proximity to the coins made for a particularly satisfying experience that few who viewed the coins will likely forget. NGC thanks the owners of the Schultz and Bingham Collections for sharing their prized beauties

with FUN show attendees.

The following images are a few select examples of the 50 coins that were displayed.



1936 CLEVELAND 50C

MS 67+★

2014611-002



NGC



1933 D OREGON 50C
BINGHAM COLLECTION

MS 68★

545454-030



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NGC Grading On-site at the Long Beach Coin & Collectibles Expo

Posted on 1/10/2011

NGC will offer grading and Details Grading, as well as encapsulation in our state-of-the-art holder. All coins submitted for on-site grading will be evaluated for Plus Designation at time of grading.

NGC will offer on-site grading and encapsulation for US coins* at the [Long Beach Coin & Collectibles Expo](#), Thursday, February 3, through Friday, February 4, 2011. Please check with NGC Customer Service for daily submission cut-off times. NGC will be at booth #458.

NGC will be offering [NGC Details Grading](#) for coins that exhibit detrimental surface conditions. This service is provided automatically and at no additional charge for all on-site grading submissions. Submitters can request to opt out of this service if they prefer to have such coins returned ungraded.

All coins certified or reholdered by NGC at shows receive the [Scratch-Resistant EdgeView® Holder](#). Please read below for complete details on the services offered during the show:

Gold Special	\$50 per coin
Gold coins valued at \$3,000 and under (5-coin minimum).	

Value WalkThrough	\$65 per coin
Coins valued at \$1,500 and under.	

WalkThrough	\$100 per coin
Coins valued from \$1,501 to \$100,000.	

Expedite WalkThrough	\$150 per coin
Guaranteed four-hour turnaround, coins valued at	

\$100,000 and under.
Coins are returned within four hours or regular show pricing applies.

High-Value WalkThrough **\$200 per coin**
Four-hour turnaround, coins valued from \$100,001 to \$500,000.

Unlimited Value WalkThrough **\$500 per coin**
Four-hour turnaround, coins valued above \$500,000.

Show ReHolder **\$10 per coin**
A coin in a scratched, chipped or older-generation NGC holder is placed in a new Scratch-Resistant EdgeView Holder.

NCS CrossOver **\$10 per coin**
A coin in an NCS holder is [NGC Details Graded](#).

*Does not include 5 oz coins.

Most coins submitted for on-site grading are returned within 24 to 48 hours, except for expedited services, which are completed within four hours.

NGC Show Representatives will also be accepting submissions for all service levels to be sent to our office in Sarasota, Fla. These include World services, ancient coin services, Early Bird, Economy, Bulk, Special Designations, PHOTO PROOF® and more!

Special Note: Due to the special handling required, NGC does not accept submissions of the following coins at this show for on-site grading or regular service submissions to be returned to the NGC offices: 20th Anniversary Eagles, Early Releases, American Liberty Series, 10th Anniversary Platinum Sets. These submissions must be sent directly to Sarasota, Fla., by the submitter.

Visit our table for answers to any questions about the services offered by NGC. Please remember that NGC does not provide opinions or free evaluations of coins at trade shows.

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NGC Ancients: Judaeane Coinage

Posted on 1/19/2011

This month, Dave Vagi discusses Judaeane coinage.

Ancient numismatics is rife with areas of specialization, and that of the Jewish homeland, Judaea, is no exception. Fortunately, this field offers much for collectors to learn and with even more left to discover, there is unlikely to be a dull moment in a lifetime of collecting.

Since the field is so broad, a distillation is necessary for a treatment this brief. Indeed, we will bypass the earliest numismatic history of Judaea, which includes issues struck when the region was under Persian and Macedonian rule. Among these coinages are the avidly collected Yehud, Samaria and Philistia coinages and civic issues of Gaza, Ascalon and Ashdod.

Furthermore, we won't cover many peripheral issues that are usually collected in connection with the history of Judaea, including silver shekels of Tyre (the coinage by which Temple Taxes were paid in Jerusalem) and silver denarii of the Roman Emperor Tiberius (A.D. 14-37), which are popularly considered the "Tribute Penny" of the Bible.

Instead, we'll start with the coinage of the Hasmonean and Herodian rulers, which together comprise the most substantial part of ancient Jewish coinage, and we'll continue through to provincial coins struck well into the third century A.D.



1. Hyrcanus I, 135-104 B.C. After the Seleucid King Antiochus IV "Epiphanes" (175-164 B.C.) took Jerusalem by force late in 169 B.C., the rule of Judaea became of greater interest to the Seleucids, who by 140 B.C. they had dedicated it to the Hasmonean family, who served as high priests in the Temple in Jerusalem for about a century. Though powerful, the Hasmoneans were subject to the will of the Seleucids, a point underscored by the fact that the Jews were limited to issuing only base metal coins. The first Hasmonean to issue coins appears to have been Hyrcanus I (called Yehohanan in Hebrew), an ambitious ruler who inherited from his father Simon the titles of ethnarch and high priest. One of his coins, a lepton which shows a palm branch and a lily, is illustrated here.



2. Alexander Jannaeus, 103-76 B.C. Another ambitious ruler of Judaea was Alexander Jannaeus, who in his desire to rule a territory as great as that of King David engaged in significant warfare. To his credit, he did succeed, and he expanded the territory under Jewish rule to its greatest extent. His personal interest in warfare and his desire to "Hellenize" his court, however, brought him into conflict with the Pharisees, who preferred that their high priest pay attention to his priestly duties and strictly obey the laws of the Torah. After being the object of insult on these grounds, Jannaeus is said to have killed 6,000 Jews, which launched a costly and brutal civil war. Alexander struck an astonishing quantity of coins, most of which were leptons that today are considered the most likely candidate for the "Widow's Mite" mentioned in Mark 12: 41-44. An example is shown here.



3. Mattathias Antigonus, 40-37 B.C. The brief reign of Mattathias Antigonus

illustrates the high stakes of politics in the later first century B.C., as the Roman Republic collapsed under the weight of civil war. Because Rome had so great an influence throughout the Mediterranean, "local" rulers often would be forced to choose sides between Rome and its enemies. In the case of Mattathias, his ambition to become king and high priest of Judaea led him to seek an alliance with the Parthians, who were then at war with the Romans. He gained Parthian support, by which he eliminated some key rivals and caused one, Herod, to flee to Rome. Soon two men – Mattathias and Herod – claimed authority in the Jewish state, each backed by a different foreign "superpower." In the end, Rome triumphed over Parthia and after a five-month siege of Jerusalem the Romans took Mattathias prisoner to Antioch where he was beheaded. Shown here is an 8-prutot coin of this unfortunate ruler.



4. Herod I “the Great,” 40-4 B.C. The war that allowed Herod to defeat his rival Mattathias Antigonus, and to assume power in the Jewish state as an instrument of Rome, also provided him with an exalted place in history. His appointment was unusual since his family was only recently converted to Judaism, and thus not priestly, and his reign brought an end to the ruling authority of the premier priestly dynasty. Herod’s authority was essentially civil (being granted the title of "king" by the Romans), and he appointed high priests that had no ties to the Hasmoneans, the priestly family with whom he had severe conflicts. Herod focused strongly on building programs, with his most impressive achievements being the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem and the construction of the city of Sebaste and the port city of Caesarea Maritima. Shown here is a prutah of Herod.



5. Agrippa II, A.D. 55-95/100 The son of the Jewish King Agrippa I (A.D. 37-44),

Agrippa II was not made king immediately upon his father's death due to his youth. However, beginning in A.D. 48/9 the Romans entrusted him with increasingly greater territories. His loyalty to Rome is revealed by the fact that he still was allowed to rule after the First Jewish War (A.D. 66-70), which occurred in the midst of his 50-year reign. Shown here is a 28-mm bronze minted by Agrippa II in A.D. 86/7 at Caesarea Paneas. While the reverse names Agrippa II, the obverse is devoted to Titus, the general who sacked Jerusalem in 70 and more than a decade later became emperor of Rome. The dating of Agrippa II's coins, which employ two different eras, is still a matter of debate. Current theory suggests this coin was issued as a posthumous commemorative for Titus during the reign of his younger brother, Domitian (A.D. 81-96).



6. Prefects and Procurators of Judaea, A.D. 6-66 From late in the reign of Augustus (27 B.C.-A.D. 14) until the outbreak of the Jewish War in A.D. 66, Judaea was largely governed by prefects or procurators, Roman officials who reported to the Roman legate in Syria. In all, 15 men held the post, though only seven are known to have issued coins, all of which were small, base metal pieces known by the name prutah. Inscriptions on these prutot name members of the Julio-Claudian family and record the date of their issuance according to the regnal year of the reigning emperor. Thus, their attribution to individual prefects and procurators is made from historical inference. The best known of these men was Pontius Pilate, who served as procurator of Judaea from A.D. 26 to 36, and who presided over the crucifixion of Jesus. One of his prutot, dated to the 17th year of Tiberius (A.D. 30/1), is shown here.



7. Jewish War, A.D. 66-70 The first of two full-scale wars waged by the Romans in Judaea, the Jewish War began in May of A.D. 66 with attacks by Jewish militants on Roman garrisons. It soon escalated into a terrifying war that resulted in a great many deaths, the sacking of Jerusalem, and the destruction of its Temple. The Jews struck silver and base metal coins to support their war effort, each of which bear a symbolic design and inscription. The coins also have dates which allow their attribution to one of the five years of the war. Shown here is a silver shekel dated to the third year (A.D. 68/9); its paleo-Hebrew inscriptions describe the coin as a “shekel of Israel” and proclaim “Jerusalem the holy”. Base metal coins of the war have different inscriptions, including “the freedom of Zion” and “to the redemption of Zion”.



8. Judaea Capta coins One of the most significant 'victory' coinages issued by the Romans trumpets their victory in the Jewish War (A.D. 66-70). Imperial coins in gold, silver and base metal were struck in very large quantities by the emperors Vespasian (A.D. 69-79) and Titus (A.D. 79-81), both of whom had commanded the Roman armies in Judaea. A variety of types were struck, most of which celebrate the victory using familiar symbols that would have been understood even by those unable to read the inscriptions, which typically are IVDAEA or IVDAEA CAPTA. The war is also referenced on provincial coins, notably a series that appears to have been struck in Caesarea Maritima. Illustrated here is a sestertius of Vespasian from A.D. 71 that shows the emperor's portrait and on its reverse a bound Jewish captive and a mourning Jewess flanking a palm tree, the Roman symbol for Judaea.



9. Bar Kokhba War, A.D. 132-135 The coinage of the Bar Kokhba War was even

more substantial than that of the Jewish War. It was made by overstriking coins withdrawn from circulation, which usually were of Roman manufacture. The series consists of silver and base metal issues, each attributable to one of the three years of the war. Designs and inscriptions betray the sincerity of the struggle, which makes these coins all the more popular with collectors. The first-year issues proclaim “the redemption of Israel”; they are followed by coins of the second year which call for “the freedom of Israel” and by those of the undated third year inscribed “for the freedom of Jerusalem.” Shown here is a zuz of the last year of the war (A.D. 134/5) which retains part of the inscription of its host coin a silver denarius of the emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96).



10. Aelia Capitolina Provincial Coinage The Romans struck coins at no less than 37 cities in the region of ancient Judaea, comprising a field colloquially known as "city coins." Jerusalem was already millennia old by the time its ruins were "founded" as a Roman colony under the name Aelia Capitolina. This seems to have occurred in A.D. 130, just before the Bar Kokhba War (A.D. 132-135), under the Emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117-138), whose image appears on coins of struck at Aelia. Among his coins are those showing a canonical "foundation" scene in which a veiled man – either the emperor or a priest – guides a yoke of oxen in a symbolic ritual. Roman emperors struck a variety of types in base metal at Aelia for more than a century, until A.D. 251. Shown here is a 22-mm bronze of Aelia with the confronted busts of the co-emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus (A.D. 161-169) and the bust of the god Serapis.

Images courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group

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United States

Counterfeit Detection: Contemporary Counterfeit 1875 Shield Nickel

Posted on 1/18/2011

This 1875 nickel instantly stood out due to its numerous planchet flaws.

Last month we featured a Chinese-made counterfeit 1914-D Buffalo nickel, a relatively low value coin that we were surprised to see faked. Shortly after that article was published we received another unusual counterfeit five cent piece: an 1875 Shield nickel. However, while the 1914-D is a modern fake of Chinese origin, we suspect that this piece is a contemporary counterfeit—a coin struck to fool the general public, not collectors.

Like the 1914-D, this coin is not a particularly deceptive counterfeit, but it is dangerous because it can easily go unnoticed. The 1875 is an average date in the Shield nickel series and even Gem examples can be located without much difficulty. This fake, however, was not intended for numismatists and was likely made in the 1870s or 1880s for circulation. The cost to produce a five cent piece was a mere fraction of its stated value and a counterfeiter could pocket the difference. By faking nickels and not silver and gold coins, the counterfeiter might also be able to strike significant quantities while escaping detection.



Counterfeit 1875 Shield Nickel
click image to enlarge



The date is notably malformed.



This 1875 nickel instantly stood out due to its numerous planchet flaws, which are indicative of an improper alloy, and the crude appearance of the letters. A metallurgic analysis (an added service offered to all NGC submitters) revealed that the composition was 74% copper, 20% nickel, and 5% zinc, a significant deviation from the proper alloy of 75% copper and 25% nickel. The weight was also slightly low at 4.5 grams (it should weigh 5 grams). The dies appear to have been at least partially engraved by hand. There is a prominent center dot on both sides, which is highly unusual for this issue, and many of the letters, as well as the digits in the date, are notably misshapen.

Upon inspection, this fake actually appears quite crude. The rim is too wide and appears split in several areas. The design is weakly struck and incomplete in the periphery, especially at LIBERTY. The mintmark bleeds into the field around it. Overall, the surfaces have an unusual appearance that makes this coin stand out from genuine examples.

Counterfeits have been around since the earliest coins were struck and some contemporary fakes have even become quite collectible. However, some of these counterfeits have found their way into collections, mistakenly thought to be genuine examples. This counterfeit was not made to dupe numismatists, but it has the potential to be overlooked as a common date. A careful inspection of any coin is always recommended.

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USA Coin Album: Some Older Numismatic Books of Interest, Part One

Posted on 1/18/2011

Hobby periodicals frequently publish announcements and reader reviews of newly published numismatic works. But what of books published 10 years ago or more, still of value but now out of print and largely unknown to current hobbyists?

Readers of the *Numismatist* sometimes ask me where I come up with some of the trivia and anecdotes I use in my columns. Much of this material comes from a series of scrapbooks I've been assembling for many years. These feature articles from both the numismatic scene and the general press, which touch on numismatic factoids not found in books. Occasionally I browse through my scrapbooks looking for topics about which to write or for little bits of numismatic trivia to insert into columns already begun. While this is one source of little-known information, a much more important one is my overall numismatic library, which I've been building for about 35 years. This is the keystone to any success in numismatic cataloging or writing.



Hobby periodicals frequently publish announcements and reader reviews of newly published numismatic works. This is a great way of spreading the word about books which may be of interest to collectors. It's especially helpful for specialized and limited market references that may not offer enough potential profit for the author or publisher to advertise them extensively. But what of books published 10 years ago or more that are still of value but are now out of print and largely unknown to current hobbyists? These important but forgotten works are the subject of this month's column.

In my first few years as a coin collector, I managed well enough with just a couple popular and general guides to United States coins. I supplemented this reading material with the monthly coin magazines found in my school's library. By my late teens, however, I hungered for more detailed information that could be found only in specialized reference books. It was my good fortune to have as a friend in one of the local coin clubs an actual dealer in numismatic literature. He made me aware of which books were considered the standard references in each coin series. Most of these had been published decades earlier, and some were then out of print and quite scarce.

In the Internet age, it has become fairly easy to track down out-of-print books. If someone does have a copy for sale anywhere in the world, there's a good chance that it can be found with some time spent searching online. In the mid-1970s, when I first became serious about building my library, the field of numismatic literature dealing was still new and had just a few participants. Getting to know them was about the only way to locate out of print numismatic works. As noted above, one of these dealers was someone I saw frequently, and that helped fill a number of gaps in my library. Of even greater fortune was that some of these seminal and standard references were just then being reprinted. Quarterman Publications put out high quality reprints of D. W. Valentine's book on half dimes, William Sheldon's study of 1793-1814 cents, Sylvester Crosby's classic work on early American coins and tokens, Frank Stewart's history of the first US Mint and other great books which I purchased as soon as I learned of them. These reprints are now themselves of varying scarcity, having been out of print for 25 years or more. Some lesser quality reprints by other publishers are available, but they don't measure up to the Quarterman quality.

In recent years there have been so many new books on United States numismatics published that some of the classic works are no longer needed. I still have one or more copies of Valentine and Sheldon, but I never open them anymore. They have been succeeded by better works that are now likewise out of print but of much greater utility to the numismatist. The study of numismatics is inseparable from knowledge of history, and there have been several good books on the history of the United States Mint and its products. Recent books by myself and also by Richard Doty of the Smithsonian Institution remain in print and are quite popular, yet some earlier works feature greater detail in specific areas and are not to be overlooked. A book that belongs in every numismatic library is the US Mint and Coinage by Don Taxay (the author, who disappeared about 30 years ago to explore his spirituality in Asia, is an interesting enough individual to have a book written about him, but I digress). Published in 1966, Taxay's reference sold well enough that used copies are readily available today and still make for great

reading. A reprint is also available, but the original 1966 printing is superior and not expensive at all.

Shortly after reading Taxay, I learned of the 1974 Quarterman reprint of Frank Stewart's 1924 work History of the First United States Mint. Stewart actually owned the 1792 mint structure and attempted valiantly to have it preserved on another site when he needed the original lot to expand his electrical business. No takers were found, and the building was demolished in 1911. Numerous artifacts, including coins and planchets, were found during the demolition, and these discoveries were incorporated into his book. Original copies are rare, much of the print run reportedly having been lost in a fire. In addition the author maintained a policy of selling his book solely to institutions and not to individuals. Nevertheless, the reprint may be found with some searching and is not expensive.

Next month I'll describe some more books on United States coinage that would make great additions to your library.

David W. Lange's column, "USA Coin Album," appears monthly in the Numismatist, the official publication of the [American Numismatic Association](#).

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NumisMedia Market Report: A Look Back at FMV Performance Part II

Posted on 1/18/2011

Last month, we reported on various series and how they performed throughout 2010. While the metals moved higher, many numismatic coins were easily saleable. However, with the economy in a downturn, buyers were still looking for discounts.

The results were less than spectacular, but without higher metals, it could have been much worse. Nonetheless, many better and rare date \$20 gold coins benefited from the fervor for gold. As prices for common US Gold increased, many better-date coins were on the rise, but went unnoticed for the first part of the year. While the mainstream media slowly began to pick up on the rarity of some of these coins, advanced collectors and investors were buying everything that had low original mintages and even lower census numbers for the grade. The following charts show how some of the true rarities progressed for the year.

\$20 Gold Liberties TII Dec. 2009 FMV Jan. 2011 FMV

1851 O MS 62	\$50,050	\$57,850
1854 O AU 50	\$331,250	\$406,250
1856 O XF	\$250,000	\$343,750
1858 O AU 58	\$33,480	\$40,630
1859 O AU 53	\$43,130	\$49,690
1860 O AU 50	\$39,380	\$44,380
1861 O AU 53	\$47,500	\$53,130

\$20 Gold Liberties TII

Dec. 2009 FMV

Jan. 2011 FMV

1868 MS 61	\$26,680	\$28,930
1870 S MS 62	\$19,180	\$26,650
1871 MS 63	\$35,780	\$42,580

1871 CC AU 50	\$31,880	\$34,380
1873 CC MS 61	\$56,030	\$64,130
1874 CC MS 61	\$21,940	\$26,330

\$20 Gold Liberties TIII	Dec. 2009 FMV	Jan. 2011 FMV
1878 CC AU 58	\$21,450	\$25,350
1878 CC MS 61	\$37,700	\$44,850
1879 CC AU 53	\$12,060	\$14,690
1879 CC MS 60	\$34,260	\$38,350
1881 AU 53	\$27,310	\$34,380
1882 CC MS 62	\$21,780	\$25,350
1884 CC MS62	\$11,510	\$16,250
1885 AU 55	\$35,750	\$42,250
1885 MS 61	\$79,950	\$86,450
1886 XF	\$21,880	\$33,130
1889 CC MS 60	\$7,350	\$9,690
1891 CC AU 58	\$20,480	\$22,430
1891 CC MS 61	\$35,750	\$38,350
1892 AU 58	\$7,350	\$11,120
1892 MS 63	\$33,410	\$39,830
1892 CC MS 61	\$11,020	\$14,760

The lists of dates and grades above were chosen based on coins that had actually traded throughout the year. In some cases, the increases may appear extreme, however, this is a result of coins that have very low populations and have not traded very often over the past 10 years. There were many other grades that advanced due to higher bids. As you can see the New Orleans and Carson City Mint coins have attracted a lot of attention. They have a unique combination of low mintage, typically small populations for the grade, and some Southern and Western historical appeal. These attributes make for an incredible background and attract a variety of collectors.

In the Twenty Dollar Liberty series, we list the Fair Market Value for 150 dates and mintmarks, including varieties. Yet, only 32 are represented by the O and CC Mints. The lowest original mintage is the 1856-O at 2,250 coins and the highest is the 1851-O at 315,000 coins minted. Keep in mind that many thousands of these coins were used in commerce and eventually melted; therefore, a more representative assessment of rarity will be the population reports of NGC and PCGS. Many advanced collectors make comparisons of population reports from five years ago to today to study how the numbers have changed per the grades. This is the main reason that many of these coins show advances this past year. There has been an increase in the number of buyers for these limited specialty Mints within this series. While there may be plenty of the lower grade coins

available in the marketplace, as the grades increase, the number of coins available dramatically decreases. So much so that when one of the highest grades available within a specific date comes onto the market, the bidding activity becomes hectic and a record price usually results.

What began as a comparison of the FMV at the beginning of 2010 to the end the year, with the intention of showing the overall ups and downs of the marketplace, took a rather interesting turn. We expected to find the results we reported in last month's FMV. However, we also figured to find that there were just as many areas that featured increases throughout the year. What we found is that the overall market performance was rather bleak. If the metals had not infused the coin market, most dealers would not be reporting their best year ever. Nonetheless, the fact is that the jump in metals helped maintain coin market activity, albeit, in many cases at slightly lower levels, and shows how overall FMV prices can be maintained even when the market direction may be downward.

The year ended with the coin market getting really hot for Morgan and Peace Dollars. This is normally a precursor to a bull market for the whole numismatic economy. However, many dealers feel that this next bull market will be a little more selective than we have seen in the past. Buyers will be looking for lower pop coins and those with exceptional eye appeal. As we have seen in many major auctions, these two characteristics charge bidding activity to its highest levels.

This article is a guest article written by:



The thoughts and opinions in the piece are those of their author and are not necessarily the thoughts of the Certified Collectibles Group.

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 United States 

From the NGC Archives: 1920 Mercury Dime

Posted on 1/18/2011

Renowned German-American sculptor Adolph A. Weinman created this type of dime that is, more correctly, called the Winged-Head Liberty.

His models were selected as the result of an invitational competition in which he was also commissioned to create a new half-dollar.



This absolutely delightful dime illustrates perfectly how an otherwise common issue can be elevated to a great rarity by virtue of its superb condition. Not only does this lovely gem exhibit virtually flawless surfaces, it also possesses truly memorable toning in a glorious array of bright colors. Every shade of the rainbow may be seen, all set against a backdrop of light, silvery gray. Rich, frosty luster provides excellent back lighting for this display. Though a bit weak at its peripheries, the bands of its fasces are quite bold.

Are you interested in Dimes? Click [here](#) to visit the NGC Coin Encyclopedia and read more.

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1907 Rolled Edge Eagle Brings \$2.185 Million in Heritage \$53 Million FUN Auctions

Posted on 1/18/2011

Part of \$62 million+ Heritage "First Week" Auctions, including \$7.74+ million FUN Currency Auction and \$9.28 million NYINC World & Ancient Coin Auction.

[TAMPA, FL] — Collectors at [Heritage's \\$46 million+ Tampa, Fla., FUN US Coin Auction](#), Jan. 5-9, kept their focus on rare gold over the course of the four days – especially during the Thursday, Jan. 6, Platinum Night offerings – a sector led by the [\\$2.185 million sale of the Frank A. Leach Specimen of the 1907 Rolled Edge eagle, Satin PR 67 NGC](#), from the Colonel George M. Monroe Collection. All prices include 15% Buyer's Premium.



The \$46 million total of the auction was the lion's share of Heritage's \$62+ million January numismatic auctions, combined with the [\\$7.74+ million US Currency Auction](#), also at FUN, and the [\\$9.28 million Heritage World & Ancient Coin auction](#), Jan. 3 in New York. More than 6,700 collectors vied for the 6,701 lots in the US Coin Auction's Signature® and Platinum Night sessions, translating into almost 1900 successful bidders, or a 95% sell-through rate by both value and lot total.

"Very solid results, across the board," said Greg Rohan, president of Heritage Auctions. "Rare and singular gold, both of which were in abundance in this

auction, continue to dictate pace and price of the market. We put together a superb auction and collectors responded with exuberance.”

The [1907 Rolled Edge eagle, PR 67, the Frank A. Leach Specimen](#), which descended in the family of the former Mint Director’s second wife, proved itself when it sold for \$2.185 million to applause in the packed auction room. The example was one of five gold coins in the auction that once belonged to Leach, and it quickly established itself as a monumental coin ranking among the most important individual specimens in 20th-century American numismatics.

“It’s hard to say, unequivocally, that this coin is a pattern,” said Rohan, “but the price would seem to indicate that several top collectors in the world believe it is. This is only the ninth US coin ever to sell for more than \$2 million at public auction.”

The famous [1795 S-79 Reeded Edge cent, Fine Details NGC, the Newcomb-Hines-Sheldon Specimen](#), was the top non-gold coin in the auction, realizing \$431,250. Last publicly offered in 1977, it is one of just eight known examples and is among the most coveted coins in American numismatic collecting circles.

“While recent years have seen a relative flurry of 1795 S-79 cents, with four showing up at auction since 2008,” said Rohan, “prior to that, one of these had shown up at auction only 21 times in the past 146 years, or once every seven years, making this a rare opportunity indeed.”

An incredible [1887 Liberty double eagle, PR67+ Cameo NGC](#), the finest certified example of the issue and one of the finest proof Liberty double eagles regardless of date, rounded out the top five offerings in the Platinum Night auction. An impressive \$402,500 final price sent the coin, part of the Henry Miller Collection, home with an advanced collector.

Further highlights include, but are certainly not limited to:

[1864 double eagle, PR 65 Ultra Cameo NGC](#): Perhaps fewer than 10 proofs of this ultra rare gold denomination are available. Realized: \$359,375.

[1933 eagle, MS 65 NGC](#): A world-class rarity. Realized: \$359,375.

[1795 Small Eagle half eagle MS 65 Prooflike NGC. Breen-6414, BD-6, R.5](#): An amazing Gem Prooflike coin among the early Mint’s most interesting products. Realized: \$345,000.

[1804 quarter MS 65 NGC. B-1, R.3. Ex: Colonel Green](#): The single finest certified

1804 Bust quarter. Realized : \$325,000.

1795 13 Leaves eagle MS 64 NGC. Breen-6830, Taraszka-1, BD-1, High R.3: A monumentally important coin in both aesthetic and historic terms. Realized: \$322,000.

Heritage Auctions, headed by Steve Ivy, Jim Halperin and Greg Rohan, is the world’s third largest auction house, with annual sales more than \$600 million, and 500,000+ online bidder members. For more information about Heritage Auctions, and to join and gain access to a complete record of prices realized, along with full-color, enlargeable photos of each lot, please visit www.HA.com

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United States

ANA Presents Destination Education Event

Posted on 1/18/2011

Mining and Minting in Carson City, March 20-23, following the ANA Money Show in Sacramento, Calif.

Go on a three-day educational adventure that explores the history of the Gold Rush in California and Nevada, tours the legendary Comstock Lode mines in Virginia City, and features top numismatic experts at the old Carson City Mint. "Minting and Mining in Carson City" is part of the American Numismatic Association's "Destination Education" series and takes place March 20-23, following the 2011 Sacramento National Money Show.™

Students will leave Sacramento by bus on Sunday, March 20, at 11 a.m., visit the Empire State Historic Park Museum and spend a night of fun and relaxation at the Peppermill Resort Spa and Casino in Reno. On March 21, students will tour the Comstock Lode, Virginia City and other historic sites before arriving at the Courtyard Marriott in Carson City.

The cost of "Minting and Mining in Carson City," including tuition, transportation, three nights of lodging, meals and dinner credits, is \$995 (single occupancy) and \$1,549 (double occupancy). To register for the learning adventure of a lifetime, call 719-482-9850 or visit www.nationalmoneyshow.com

Featured Experts:

Fred Holabird is the tour guide to the mines and towns of the Comstock Lode. Holabird has been a mining industry expert for 25 years, is well-published in mining publications and has been responsible for discovery and production at two Nevada gold mines.

Fred Weinberg, president of Weinberg & Co., leads a discussion of major US

Mint errors and the evolution of the coin error hobby. Weinberg was the only coin dealer to examine varieties among 2.5 million Carson City silver dollars at the US Bullion Depository in 1973.

Bob Nysten, curator of history at the Nevada State Museum, explores the history of the Carson City Mint. Nysten has researched Nevada history for 30 years, developed the Kit Carson Trail Walking Tour and created many museum exhibits.

Gene Hattori, curator of anthropology at the Nevada State Museum, discusses excavations in Lovelock, Nevada that revealed U.S. gold coins beneath the city’s former Chinatown. Hattori has worked on archaeological sites throughout Nevada and in San Francisco.

Ken Hopple, chief coiner at the Nevada State Museum, gives demonstrations of the historic Coin Press No. 1 that minted the first coins at the US Mint in Carson City in 1870. Hopple has served as the operator of the press – an 1869 Morgan and Orr machine – for nine years.

The American Numismatic Association is a congressionally chartered nonprofit educational organization dedicated to encouraging people to study and collect money and related items. The ANA helps its members and the public discover and explore the world of money through its vast array of education and outreach programs, as well as its museum, library, publications, conventions and seminars. For more information, call 719-632-2646 or visit www.money.org

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Spectrum Group International's Bowers and Merena Auctions to Join Forces with Stack's to Create Stack's-Bowers Numismatics

Posted on 1/18/2011

Bowers and Merena and Stack's to merge in 2011.

[IRVINE, Calif.] December 22, 2010 — Spectrum Group International Inc. (SPGZ.PK) announced today that its subsidiary Bowers and Merena Auctions, one of the world's preeminent auctioneers of rare coins and currency, has entered into an agreement with Stack's, the oldest rare coin retail and auction company in the US, to combine their operations. The new company, which will be known as Stack's-Bowers Numismatics, with a world coin division to be known as Stack's-Bowers and Ponterio, will be owned 51% by Bowers and Merena Auctions and 49% by Stack's. The closing, which is subject to the satisfaction of customary conditions, is expected to take place in early 2011.

Greg Roberts, president and chief executive officer of Spectrum Group (SGI), commented, "We believe that this combination, once consummated, will create a major player in the coin industry. Stack's had more than \$65 million in aggregate sales in 2010 and between them, the two companies have handled many of the significant coin collections that have sold at public auction, including the Eliasberg Sales, the Norweb Sales and the Ford Collections."

Bowers and Merena Auctions president Chris Napolitano, who will serve as president of the combined company, said, "I am honored and excited to lead this new venture, which combines two of the leading names in our industry. We consider Stack's to be the crown jewel of coin auction houses and with this

partnership, we have assembled a numismatic team that we believe to be unequalled in the industry. We look forward to continuing and expanding Stack’s auction and retail locations in mid-town Manhattan, which serve not only the greater New York metropolitan area but also the entire East Coast.”

Added Mr. Roberts, “A significant factor for SGI in pursuing this merger was the opportunity to partner with Charles, Joel and Harold Anderson and the rest of the Anderson family, who own a controlling interest in Stacks. For years I have enjoyed a strong personal and professional relationship with the Andersons and now look forward to a long-lasting association with the family through Stack’s-Bowers Numismatics. We intend to continue the long tradition the Stack family developed over many decades in New York. For years it has been a goal of ours to have a presence in NYC. With this partnership, we will achieve that goal at one of the most famous and prestigious addresses in the numismatics industry: 123 West 57th Street, New York, New York.”

Joel Anderson commented, “We are looking forward with great enthusiasm to the successful combination of these two fine companies. Both have rich histories of service with integrity to the numismatic community and together their combined resources and talents will bring new levels of service and value to the numismatic market. In addition, Charles, Harold and I have assembled some nice collections and we are pleased that Stack’s-Bowers Numismatics will be there for us when the time comes to sell.”

Mr. Roberts concluded, “Consistent with our goal of creating long-term value for our shareholders, we have made the decision to focus our energy on growing our core trading and numismatics businesses, and this transaction is a key part of that strategy. For those same reasons, we have entered into an agreement to sell our arms and armor auction company, Greg Martin Auctions, back to Greg Martin and his partners, following its January auction in Las Vegas. Under Mr. Martin’s leadership, we have every expectation that Greg Martin Auctions will continue its tradition of providing expert appraisal and auction services to collectors of antique firearms.”

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